

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Please amend the specification as follows:

Beginning on page 15, line 11 of Applicants' September 9, 2003 Specification:

--Another possibility to enter the default-route-prefix P_d into the routing table cache L_1 is to not wait until a data packet arrives, but to perform an upfront check on the routing table L_2 in which the address space of the routing table L_2 is analyzed for valid destination address prefixes, and uncovered prefixes are used for determining default-route-prefixes P_d therefor and creating an entry comprising the default-route-prefix P_d together with a default routing destination, in the routing table cache L_1 . This is also referred to as prefetching method and it has the advantage of enabling faster data packet processing. It may even be combined with the data-packet triggered determination of the default-route-prefix P_d , in that only a part of the uncovered prefixes is subjected to the prefetching method and the rest is subject to the data-packet triggered determination. Prefetching provides to be more advantageous for the parts of the address space that can be covered by a short default-route-prefix P_d , since that prefix uses reduced table space.

Having used the prefetching method, a default-route-prefix P_d already resides together with a default routing destination as an entry in the routing table cache L_1 , at the time of arrival of the data packet and in the event that the default-route-prefix P_d matches with at least part of the destination address d , in the default forwarding step 5 the data packet is forwarded to the corresponding default routing destination.--